



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

News Release

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CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN STATE DEPARTMENT AND ICE LEADS TO NEW JERSEY GANG ARREST *Salvadorian Gang Member Now Behind Bars*

NEWARK, N.J. -- U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents in New Jersey have arrested a 19-year-old member of the notorious Salvadorian 18th Street Gang. Dennis Amilcar Terezon-Zepeda was captured this week in Newark.

The arrest of Terezon-Zepeda highlights the close cooperation between the United States Department of State and ICE. Last summer in El Salvador Terezon-Zepeda applied for an immigrant visa to enter the United States, but was denied by the State Department due to his gang affiliation.

The State Department informed the ICE attaché office in San Salvador of the possibility that Terezon-Zepeda would attempt to enter the country and might turn up in New Jersey. Acting on that information ICE agents from the Newark office were able to locate the gang member at the house of a family member and arrest him. Terezon-Zepeda now faces immigration charges for entering the country illegally. He has been placed in removal proceedings and will be held in custody pending his hearing in immigration court.

The arrest of Terezon-Zepeda is part of Operation Community Shield, which was launched in March 2005 as a comprehensive law enforcement initiative targeting the violent criminal street gang Mara Salvatrucha known as MS-13. Newark agents also recently arrested Manuel Guerra-Mejia, a Honduran national and MS-13 gang member. He entered the U.S. illegally and has criminal history that includes a conviction for burglary. He remains in ICE custody pending removal proceedings. Community Shield has since been expanded to target all criminal street gangs that pose a risk to public safety and a concern to national security. More than 1,500 members and associates from gangs such as MS-13, Sureños, 18th Street gang, Latin Kings, Vatos Locos, Mexican Mafia, and La Raza have been arrested since the operation began.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.